

**Steele-Waseca  
Cooperative  
Electric**

# Member Handbook

*Contact us:*

Phone .....(507) 451.7340  
Email. ....[info@swce.coop](mailto:info@swce.coop)  
Website .....[www.swce.coop](http://www.swce.coop)  
24-hour outage reporting .....(507) 451.7340  
[Outage Map](#)  
Pay by Phone: 844.427.3417 or via [SmartHub](#)



Office hours: Monday: – Friday 8 AM – 4:30 PM  
Operations office hours: Monday – Friday: 8 AM – 3:30 PM

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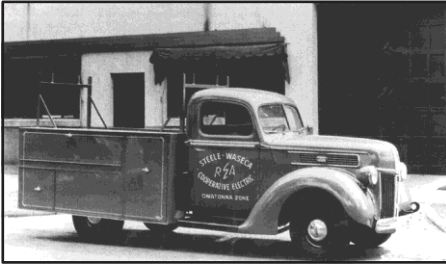
**Mission:** Provide competitive, reliable, high-quality service to our membership

This should be accomplished by striving for excellence through continual improvement, applying prudent leadership, partnering, and following cooperative principles.

**Vision:** Be the electrical provider of choice in our service area

We shall be good listener to our members, a competitive player in our industry, and a valued member of our community.

## HISTORY



Prior to 1935, electric service in the rural areas of the United States was extremely sparse. Almost everyone living in the rural areas was a farmer. Without electricity, the farmers had to pump water by hand and use wood or coal stoves to cook food and heat their homes, which made their lives labor intensive. Privately-owned power companies refused to build lines to most of the rural areas because there was not enough money to be made by serving farmers.



Then, on May 11, 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the Rural Electrification Administration to encourage rural electrification and to lend low-interest money to any group or company willing to undertake the task. When private companies still wouldn't get in-volved, the farmers formed cooperatives to do the job themselves.

The seed that grew into Steele-Waseca's network of rural electric lines was planted at a Havana Farm Bureau meeting on Oct. 5, 1935. One year later, Steele-Waseca was formed when Waseca Cooperative Electric and Steele County Cooperative Electric voted to consolidate on Oct. 10, 1936. At that time, there were 860 members.

In March 1937, the Rice County REA, known as Cannon Valley Cooperative Power and Light Association, merged with Steele-Waseca. The merge added another 443 members to Steele-Waseca's growing membership.

On July 5, 1937, several thousand people witnessed the first pole setting ceremony at the Beaver Lake picnic grounds. Later that year, about 350 members attended Steele-Waseca's first annual meeting on Oct. 15, 1937. By that time, paid membership in the cooperative numbered 1,650.

After two and one-half years of concentrated efforts, the first part of Steele-Waseca's line was energized in February 1938. When completed, the first project consisted of 350 miles of line.

Today, Steele-Waseca has 19 sub-stations, over 2,200 miles of overhead and underground lines; more than 11,000 service locations.

## WHERE YOUR POWER COMES FROM

SWCE is a distribution cooperative. We purchase power from Great River Energy and local renewable resources. The power is transmitted to Steele-Waseca substations through transmission lines for distribution to our members. Power purchases from Alliant Energy are in accordance with the purchase agreement Southern Minnesota Energy Cooperative (SMEC) completed July 31, 2015. Steele-Waseca was among the 12 co-ops of SMEC who purchased Alliant's Minnesota service territory. The power purchase agreement with Alliant Energy is for up to 10 years.

## WHO READS YOUR METER

Steele-Waseca has been utilizing automated meter reading technology since the late 1990s. The first units automatically read the meters and transmitted the readings over power lines to receivers at our substations. After being received at the substations, the readings traveled via phone lines to a computer modem at our office. The second generation units provided two-way communication between the meter and our office and read the meter similar to the first generation units. Steele-Waseca started implementing radio frequency (RF) meters in 2015, which sends the meter readings from routers to collectors before received at our office. Feel free to occasionally read your meter and compare the reading with the one on your billing statement. Please report any problems you may notice to our office.

## YOUTH EDUCATION

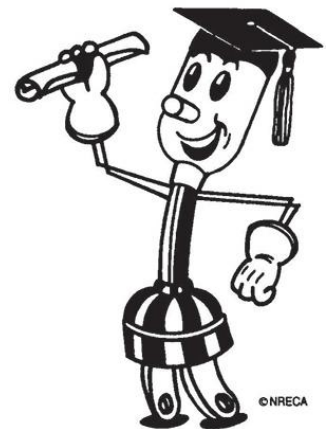
Your co-op cares about the education of today's youth.

That's why we sponsor an all-expense paid trip for either high school sophomore(s) or junior(s) to Washington, D.C., during the NRECA Youth Tour in June.

Steele-Waseca also offer scholarships each year for post-secondary education. Watch our Sparks newsletter for more information about these important youth opportunities.

Throughout the year we also present several electrical safety and information programs for schools and other community organizations.

To schedule one of these programs, go to <https://swce.coop/speaker-presentations>



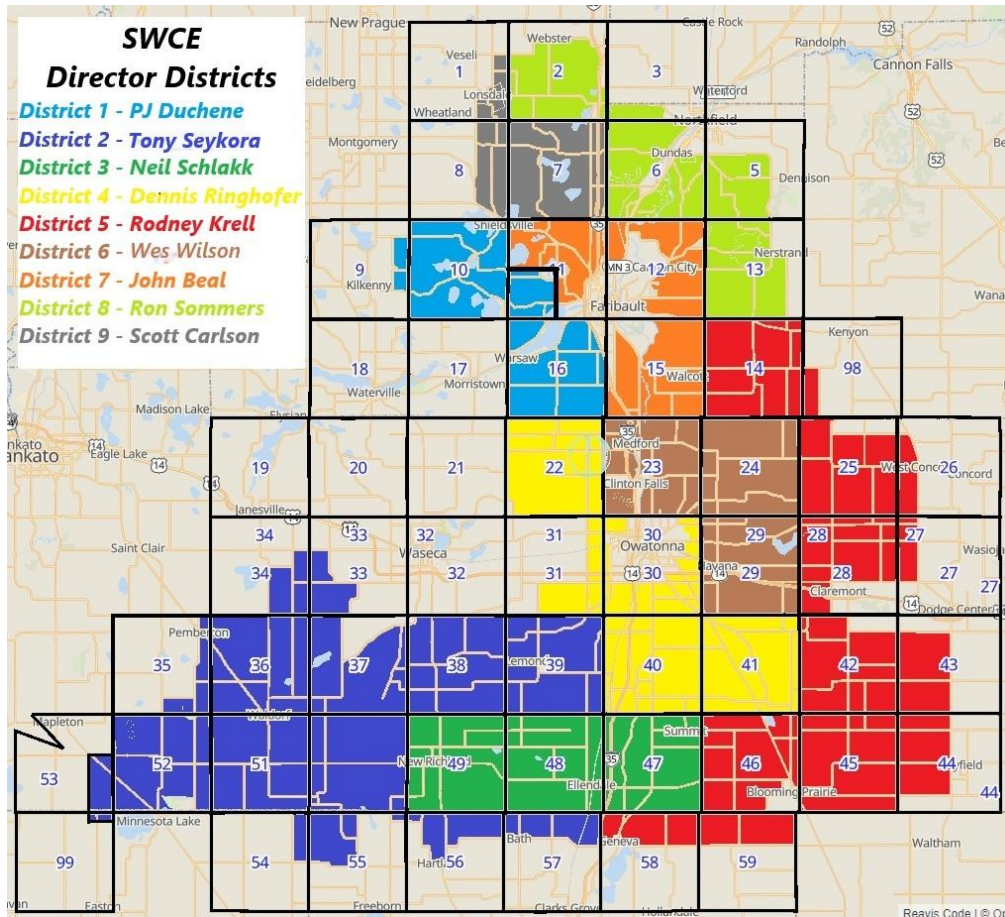
# WHO REPRESENTS YOU

Steele-Waseca is organized under the seven cooperative principles of enterprise and is owned by the members it serves. Under the Articles of Incorporation and bylaws of the cooperative, SWCE members elect directors to represent them for three-year terms on the board of directors. As a member of SWCE, this gives you a direct voice in the operation of the cooperative.

SWCE’s service territory consists of nine districts with one director representing each district. Directors are elected at annual meetings. The districts are rotated so that one-third of the directors are elected each year.

A Nominating Committee, comprised of SWCE members, nominates the director candidates. Notification of the meeting date, time, and the nominated candidates is published in the Sparks newsletter prior to each annual meeting.

Responsibilities of the [board of directors](#) include establishing cooperative policy, setting rates, and approving work plans and expenditures. The board also selects the general manager who is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operation of SWCE and its employees.



## SEVEN COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

# 7 Cooperative Principles



**1 VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP**

**DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL**



**3 MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION**

**AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE**



**5 EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION**

**COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES**



**7 CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY**

## WHAT DETERMINES RATES

Steele-Waseca's rates are based on the cost of providing electric service to members. Revenue from the monthly cost of service charge helps finance the capital investments Steele-Waseca must make in order to get electricity from our power supplier to you. These large, long-term investments pay for wire, power poles, substations, transformers, and line equipment. They are separate from monthly operating costs, such as power cost, depreciation, taxes, insurance, and labor, which are recovered through the actual sale of electricity charge, not the cost-of-service charge.

Whether you buy a lot of electricity or very little, Steele-Waseca must pay off the loans that are secured to build the substations and lines which serve you. We are also required by our lending agency to keep our equipment in tip-top shape, regardless of the wear and tear Mother Nature hands us.

SWCE operates on a not-for-profit basis. Any revenues collected in excess of the actual costs of operation are returned to members through rate rebates and capital credits. Rate schedules are available upon request.

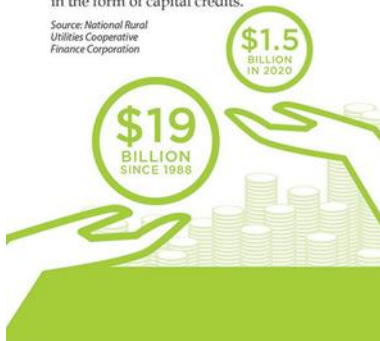
## CAPITAL CREDIT EQUITY OWNERSHIP

Every cooperative in the United States depends on its members as owners to provide necessary funding or capital equity for operation and to maintain a revenue margin that assures financial stability. Each member's capital equity ownership is the dollar value of his/her contribution in the cooperative.

### Did You Know?

Electric cooperatives have retired \$19 billion to members since 1988 – \$1.5 billion in 2020 alone. Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues (called margins) are allocated and retired to members in the form of capital credits.

Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation



At the end of each year, any money paid by members which is not spent on the operating expenses of the cooperative is credited to its members' equity accounts. The amount of money allocated to each member is based on his/her energy purchases for the year. Each member annually receives notification of money allocated to him/ her. This money, called capital credit equity, is periodically refunded to the members as the cooperative's financial conditions permit. Under current law, no part of the allocated equity is taxable until it's actually paid in cash. And at that time, it's subject to taxation only to the extent that your electric costs were deducted as an expense on your income tax return for the year the equity was allocated.

When refunded, usually in December each year, capital credit equity is applied to all active account energy bills. Members who move away and no longer have active accounts continue to receive their equity refunds as checks. That's why it's important for past members to notify us whenever their address changes.

## SECURITY DEPOSITS

Steele-Waseca requires all new members to pay a security deposit. Each deposit earns interest which is applied to the member's monthly bills at a rate specified by Minnesota Statute 325E.02 (b).

Deposit requirements: Two (2) months of average bill or \$250, whichever is higher.

The deposit will be added to your first bill if not paid by the application date.

A deposit minimum of \$250 may be required whenever an account is in a disconnect situation for nonpayment.

Commercial: Two (2) months estimated usage. This will be retained until thirty-six (36) consecutive monthly billing payments have been received by the Steele-Waseca office by the due date every month.

### **Deposit Refunds**

Once you've established good credit with SWCE, your deposit will be refunded via bill credit. Good credit for residential accounts is accomplished when we receive 12 consecutive monthly payments in our office by the due date each month.

Regardless if you have a residential, seasonal or commercial account, if you end service with Steele-Waseca before your deposit is refunded, the deposit will be applied to your final bill.

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

Mail your payment using the return envelope included with your billing statement. If you lose or prefer not to use the return envelope, you may mail your payment to:

SWCE

PO Box 485

Owatonna MN 55060-0485

- Pay 6-12 months in advance using our EnergyPrepay Discount plan.
- Pay at our office, located at 2411 West Bridge Street, Owatonna, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday or pay by check or money order using our 24-hour payment box located in front of our office building.
- Use your Visa®, MasterCard® or Discover® by calling or stopping at our office. Or you may pay online at our website, [www.swce.coop](http://www.swce.coop), by utilizing the [one-time payment option](#) on the website's home page. If you prefer, you may enroll in automatic payments by registering your account online.
- **SmartHub:** Our SmartHub web portal or mobile app will keep you informed and show you where to save time and money on your bills. Learn how to register using the [web](#) or the mobile [app](#)!
  - Billing & Payments
  - Alerts & Notifications
  - Paperless Billing
  - Usage Monitoring

After you have established a 12-month billing history with Steele-Waseca, you'll have the option to use our budget billing program, which will allow you to pay the same amount each month.

SWCE also has gift certificates available for purchase when you need a thank you gift or an idea for that person who has everything.

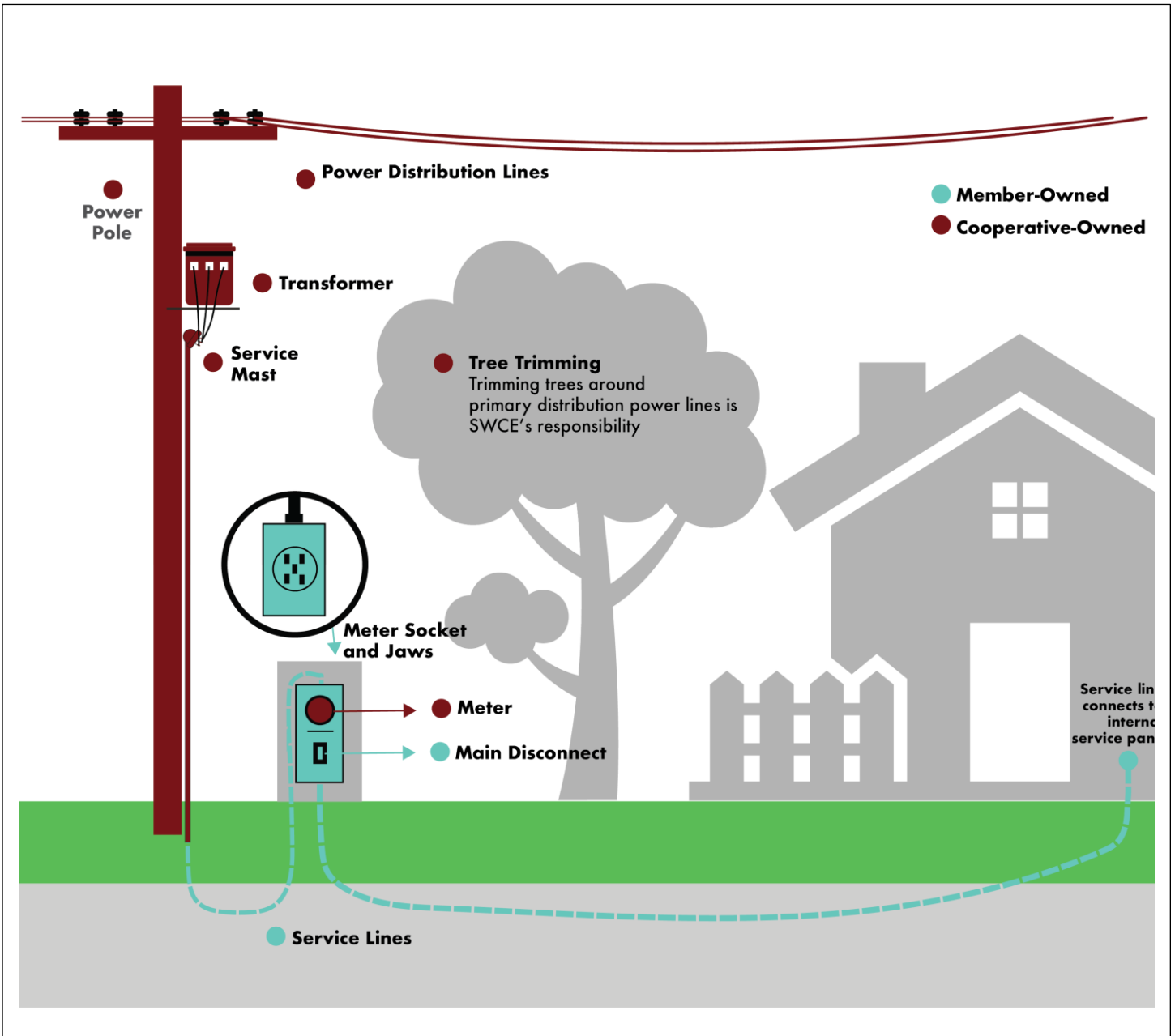
## PROGRAMS

SWCE offers many energy-reduction and cost-saving options through our programs. Learn more in the links below.

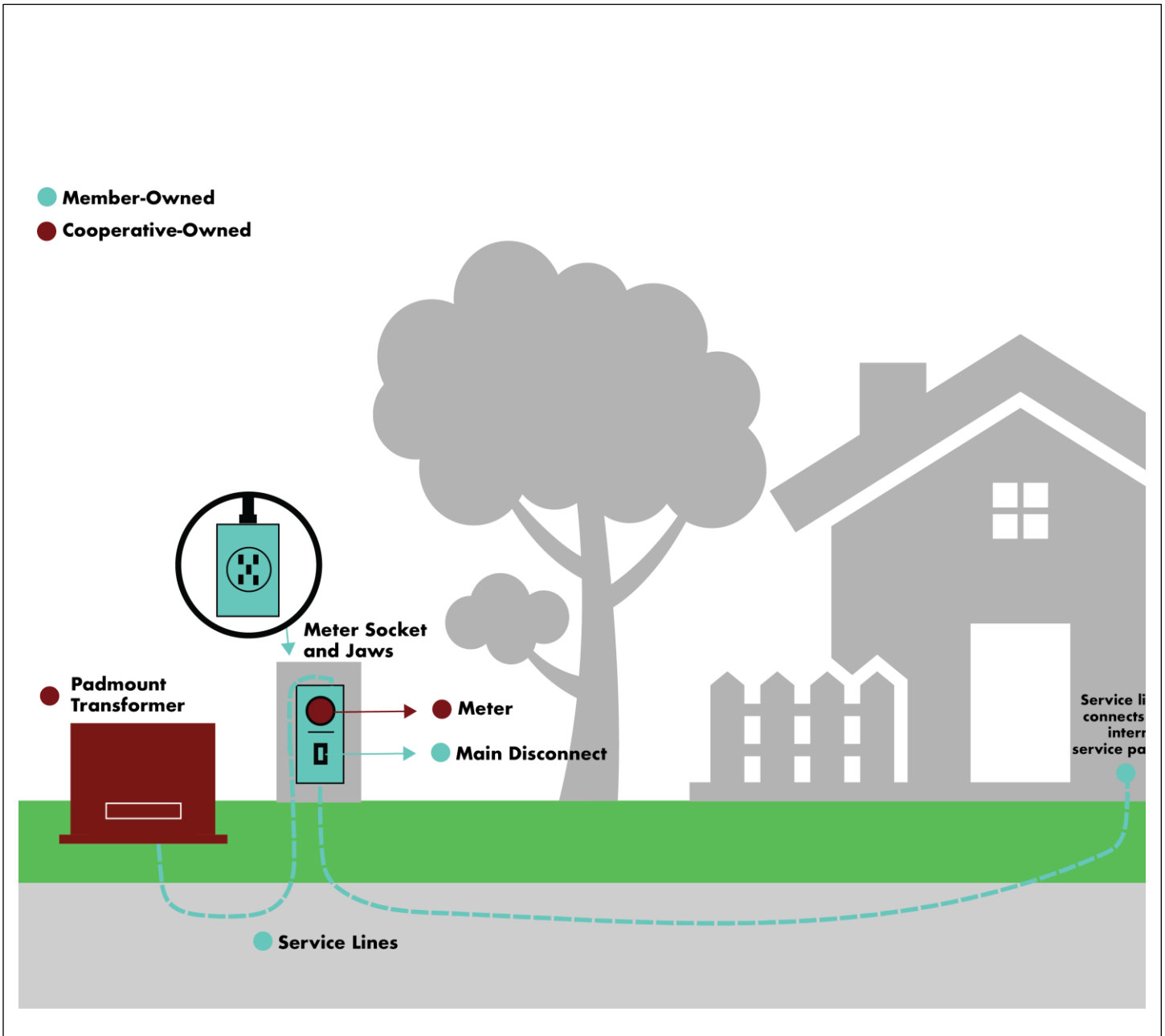
- Water heaters: <https://www.swce.coop/water-heaters>
- Yard/Security Light: <https://www.swce.coop/yard-security-light>
- Energy Management (Dual Fuel, Curtailment, Interruptible, Own Your Power): <https://www.swce.coop/energy-management>
- EV Charging: <https://www.swce.coop/electric-vehicle-charging>
- Rebates: <https://www.swce.coop/rebates>
- Classifieds: <https://www.swce.coop/classifieds>

# YOURS, MINE, OR OURS – OVERHEAD & UNDERGROUND SERVICE

## OVERHEAD



# UNDERGROUND



## **WHAT TO DO IF THE POWER GOES OFF**

Steele-Waseca does everything possible to keep your lights on, but sometimes Mother Nature has other ideas. It doesn't happen often, but there may be times when your electric service is interrupted.

If your power goes off, use the following steps to check your system before phoning Steele-Waseca:

1. Check the fuses or circuit breakers in your home or whichever building is without power. If they're OK, check the fuses or circuit breakers on the meter pole or by the meter.
2. If the problem isn't with your electric service, phone your neighbors to see if they have power. Knowing if it's a single or multiple outage can be helpful to our line technicians.
3. Look for possible causes such as a tree branch on wires, a broken pole, twisted wires, etc.

After you've verified your own equipment is OK, and you've checked with your neighbors, you should phone Steele-Waseca at 507-451-7340. The phone number is answered 24 hours a day, everyday of the year. If the lines are busy, there is most likely a high volume of outages, so please be patient when calling. When phoning, be ready to provide your account name and number, address, phone number, and what the problem is, if known. Any information you can provide could help shorten the length of time you are out of power.

Outages may also be reported at [swce.coop](http://swce.coop), as that alerts co-op personnel. Please DO NOT use social media to report an outage, as that is NOT associated with the co-op's outage management software.

## **STANDBY GENERATORS**

Investing in a standby generator is like paying for an insurance policy—you hope you'll never need it, but if you do, it's there. A safe, standby power system requires two elements:

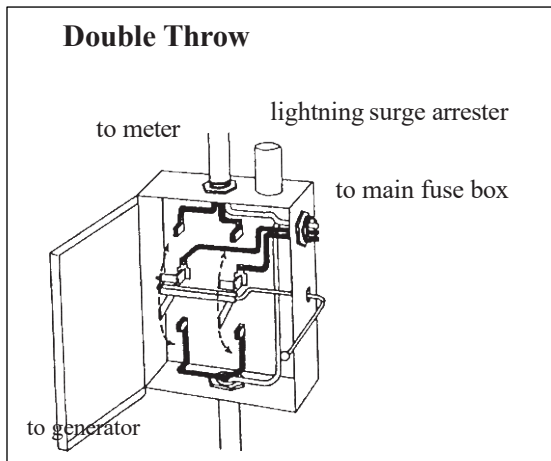
1. A double throw transfer switch to isolate your electrical system from Steele-Waseca's system.
2. A power-driven generator or alternator to produce the proper amount of electricity you'll need.

Generators must be sized to the amount of items you want to run during an outage situation. You can size them to run your entire electrical system, only your house and well, or just a few electrical circuits in your house. After deciding what you'll need to run during an outage, use your electrician's help to determine how and what size double throw switch to install.

Proper installation of a double throw switch is critical and requires an inspection from a state wiring inspector. Improper installation of a standby generator can be deadly. The National Electric Code, as well as Steele-Waseca,

Without a double throw switch, the electricity your generator produces could feed back to the transformer, which would step up the 240 volts to 7,200 volts. This voltage could be deadly to a lineman who is assuming the line is off. A double throw switch will also protect your generator if you're still operating it when the power comes back on.

Even though there may not be any outages for several months, it's a wise idea to operate your double throw switch and generator several times a year to make sure they're both operating properly—before you need them.

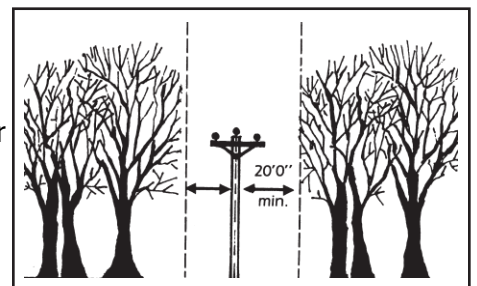


If you have any questions about purchasing or connecting a standby generator, please contact your electrician or phone the Steele-Waseca office.

## POWER LINE RIGHTS-OF-WAY & TREE TRIMMING

To help maintain safe, reliable electric service, power line rights-of-way (see illustration) must be maintained on a regular basis. Many outages are caused by branches rubbing on power lines or by tree limbs falling across them. To reduce these outages, Steele-Waseca uses a systematic tree trimming, spraying, and cutting program throughout its over 2,200 miles of power lines.

Planting trees or shrubs in a power line right-of-way can hinder maintenance and repair of the power line. SWCE encourages you to help keep rights-of-way clear by always looking up before planting trees.



Also, if you notice a tree problem at your location, please phone our office to report it or go online to <https://swce.coop/tree-trimming> before it causes an outage. Your cooperation with this program results in reduced rights-of-way maintenance costs, fewer outages, and more reliable service.

## **CALL BEFORE YOU DIG. IT'S THE LAW**

According to Minnesota state law, anyone planning to dig more than 12 inches deep must notify Gopher State One Call (GSOC) at least two (2) working days before the scheduled digging.

1-800-252-1166 or 811

For emergencies, GSOC is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; non-emergency calls should be made weekdays between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. GSOC can also be notified online at: [www.gopherstateonecall.org](http://www.gopherstateonecall.org).

## **WHAT DETERMINES YOUR ELECTRICAL USAGE**

A number of different factors make up the total electrical usage for your home. Your family's size and lifestyle will affect the number of kilowatt hours you use each month. Here are a few factors to consider when determining what makes up your family's total usage.

### **FAMILY SIZE**

The number of people living in a home, their age, and the number of hours they spend at home relates directly to the amount of energy used. Taking showers, washing and drying clothes, cooking meals, even how many times a day the refrigerator door is opened, will add to the number of kilowatts used daily. When guests visit, you can expect that usage to increase.

## **SEASONAL FLUCTUATIONS**

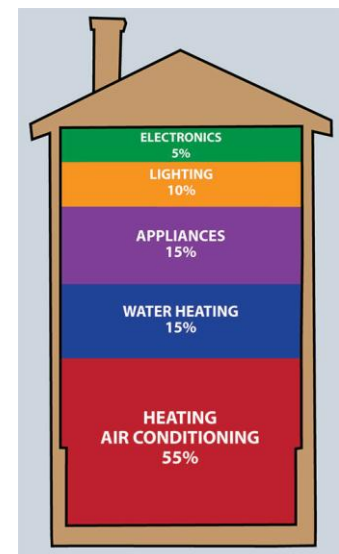
Heating and cooling your home accounts for a major portion of your total home energy usage. Any month with extremely hot or cold temperatures will cause usage to fluctuate. Each home's type of heating and cooling systems,

along with its temperature settings, will also cause differences in energy usage.

### **APPLIANCES**

While home appliances are huge labor savers, they're also significant energy users. Appliances and lighting account for about one-quarter of the total home energy use. The number of appliances and how much energy they use can differ greatly from home to home. The good news is appliances and lighting are becoming more energy efficient every year.

**Typical Minnesota Residential Energy Use**



## WATER HEATING

Water heating is often the second largest energy expense in a Minnesota home and may account for up to 33 percent of the household's annual energy costs. You can reduce hot water expenses by using a high-efficiency water heater. Phone our office to learn more about how you can participate in our energy-efficient HTP Water Heater Program. Details can be found: <https://swce.coop/water-heaters>

Your home is unique

Different families, different equipment, and different lifestyles—it's easy to see how each home is unique and will have its own energy usage pattern. If you're interested in understanding "what uses watts" in your home, use the calculation guide on the following pages to estimate your monthly kWh usage.

Kill A Watt™

Steele-Waseca also has a "Kill a Watt™" electronic watts meter that you can rent with the payment of a refundable deposit to check the usage of your electric appliances. The meter has a display that shows the amount of electricity being consumed by whatever is plugged into it and the cost of that electricity.

### How much does it use?

You can figure the usage of any home appliance if you know its wattage (or amps) and how long you use it. Here are the formulas:

Convert amps to watts:  $\text{amps} \times 120 \text{ volts} = \text{watts}$

$\text{Watts} \times \text{hours used} = \text{watt hours}$

$\text{Watt hours} \div 1,000 = \text{kilowatt hours (kWh)}$

If you use a 100 watt lightbulb for 10 hours, you would use 1 kWh

## ELECTRICITY – HANDLE WITH CARE

We at SWCE want you to be careful near electricity. Although this important product cannot be seen, smelled or heard, it can be felt. One touch can be deadly. Enjoy electricity's benefits, but please be careful.

- Children are naturally curious, so begin teaching them as early as possible to never put their fingers or other objects into any electrical appliance or outlet. Keep plug covers on unused outlets and be sure to keep all electrical appliances away from children, bathtubs, and sinks.

- Electricity can travel down the strings of kites or balloons that touch power lines and can cause shock or fire. Always use kites and balloons in open areas, away from overhead lines. Keep metallic balloons indoors, as they are highly conductive. Teach children that when a toy gets into power lines or a substation, they should tell an adult to call Steele-Waseca and should never attempt to retrieve it themselves.

- If you have ever touched an illuminated lightbulb, you know how hot it can get—hot enough to cause burns and start fires. Electric heaters and toasters get much hotter. So, keep anything that can burn away from lightbulbs, heaters, toasters, or any other appliance with a heating element.

- Electricity and water do not mix. Always unplug small electrical appliances after using them. Even when the switches say “off”, power is still present and can electrocute you if they contact water.

- Don’t overload outlets. If you must use an extension cord, match the amperage or wattage limits marked on the cord and appliance.

- Repair or replace worn and frayed electrical cords. Pull cords out of outlets by the plug head; never pull on the cord. Never carry an appliance with its cord, and don’t run a cord under a rug or furniture.

- Please phone our office immediately if you observe any hazardous power line situations, such as downed lines, sagging or broken wires, trees or fallen branches entangled in power lines, unsecured electrical equipment (such as: transformers, substations, loose guy wires etc.), TV antennas entangled in power lines, and cracked, damaged, or leaning utility poles. Reporting these problems to Steele-Waseca will help prevent power outages.

## **SALES TAX EXEMPTION**

Farmers and corporations who qualify for exemption of Minnesota sales tax on electricity used in agricultural or industrial production should contact our office. By completing a Fuels and Energy Exemption Certificate and filing it with the cooperative, only the non-exempt amount of sales tax will be calculated on your energy statement each month. More information can be obtained at the Minnesota Department of Revenue’s website: [www.revenue.state.mn.us](http://www.revenue.state.mn.us).

## **GLOSSARY**

We hope you find this glossary useful in sorting out the some-times complicated terminology of electricity.

*All-requirements power contract* – A contract primarily used by municipal electric and rural electric systems that describes a formal agreement entered into by a power supply system and its member distribution systems. In this contract the distribution systems agree to purchase all their wholesale

power needs from the power supply system at rates prescribed in the agreement and adjusted periodically to meet the power supply system's costs of providing the power.

*Cooperative electric utility* – A system in which consumers of electricity own their own distribution system, which in turn owns the wholesale power supplier.

*Cost of service* – The total amount required to provide a member consumer with electric service, not including the cost of energy used.

*Demand* – The total amount of electricity being used by consumers varies from hour to hour, day to day, and season to season. This usage, which is expressed in kilowatts and is called the “demand” on the system. Seasonal demands are affected by the number of daylight hours, temperature extremes, and activities such as agricultural processes.

*Distribution lines* – The high-voltage lines, typically 7,200 volts, that deliver power from the substation to the service transformers.

*Distribution system* – An electric system with poles, wire and trans-formers used to deliver electric energy from a bulk power supplier to the consumers.

*Dual Fuels* – A heating system that combines two fuel sources—electricity as a primary and propane, oil or other fuel as a secondary source (or vice versa). This is accomplished by either adding an electric heating unit to a gas furnace or adding propane or oil appliances as a backup system to an electric appliance.

*Grid* – A system of high-voltage trans-mission and power generating facilities that is interconnected with a number of bulk power supply agencies on a regional basis. A grid enables power to be transmitted from areas having a surplus to areas experiencing a shortage.

*Heat pump* – A system supplying both space heating and cooling. The heat pump removes heat from the outside air and pumps it indoors.

The heat pump can also function as an air conditioner, absorbing heat from indoors and releasing it to the outside.

*Investor-owned utility (IOU)* – Utilities that generate and distribute electrical energy for a profit. The IOUs are owned by stockholders who are not necessarily the users of the electric power they produce.

*Kilowatt (kW)* – The basic unit of electric demand, equal to 1,000 watts. The average household demand is 10 to 20 kilowatts.

*Kilowatt-hour (kWh)* – The basic measure of electric energy generation or use. One kilowatt-hour is the amount of electric energy required to operate a 100-watt bulb for 10 hours.

*Load management* – A program by which an electric system seeks to control its customers' use of electricity so as to reduce the system's total demand at a time of maximum usage.

*Mill* – One tenth of a cent; a common utility industry monetary measure.

*Municipal Utility (muni)* – Refers to a municipality that has its own electrical generating and distribution systems and/or purchases electricity at wholesale from another electrical supplier.

*Ripple control* – The remote control of switching devices which uses power lines as signal carriers. A coded audio frequency “ripple” is superimposed onto the power lines at one or more injection point(s). This signal is detected by receivers situated at the loads to be controlled. Generally used for load management purposes.

*Single-phase power* – An electric circuit that consists of one alternating current, typically used for household power.

*Substation* – An electrical facility containing equipment for controlling the flow of electricity from supplier to user.

*Three-phase service* – Generally has four wires from the power pole to the meter - three “hot” wires and a neutral wire. Even when a three-phase power line is available to a consumer, it does not necessarily mean that consumer has three-phase service. Single-phase service is often supplied from three-phase lines.

*Three-phase power* – An electric circuit that consists of three separate currents delivered at one-third cycle intervals by means of a three-wire circuit; typically used to power large industrial motors.

*Transformer* – A device used to raise or lower voltage in electric distribution or transmission lines. Transformers are used to increase voltage at the generating plant for transmission to the substation. The substation transformers reduce voltage to distribution level.

## **MOVING**

### **Moving? Don't forget to notify us!**

It's important for you to contact us in advance with instructions to close your account. Please don't rely on a future owner or tenant to change the service name, because if the service continues in your name after you move, you're responsible for the power used.

You'll want to provide us with a forwarding address. Your deposit, if not previously refunded, will be applied to your final bill, and any remaining credit will be refunded to you. You'll also want to make sure we have your forwarding address so you can receive capital credit retirement checks as they're issued.

## **ELECTRIC ENERGY – CONSUMER BILL OF RIGHTS**

We, the consumer-owned, not-for-profit members of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, endorse the following Electric Energy Consumer Bill of Rights. We believe it to be the standard against which electric utility restructuring proposals at the state and federal legislatures should be measured:

1. The right to have access to reliable, affordable and safe electric power.
2. The right to join together to establish and operate a consumer-owned, not-for-profit business.
3. The right of consumer-owned, not-for-profit systems to be treated fairly and to be recognized as a unique form of business.
4. The right to elect representatives to manage their consumer-owned form of business to best meet their needs.
5. The individual right to privacy that ensures information about consumers will not be released without their prior express consent.
6. The right to determine the scope of energy services to be furnished through their consumer owned, not-for-profit utilities.
7. The right to use consumer-owned, not-for-profit utilities to provide additional services that meet the needs of their consumers and communities.
8. The right to work in cooperation with other consumer-owned entities with common goals.

### *Nondiscrimination Statement*

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is the recipient of Rural Development funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for  
Civil Rights 1400 Independence  
Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.